
TEACHING PRACTICE DURING THE PANDEMIC OUTBREAK: PERCEPTIONS OF PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Current studies report that a teaching practice program is important for pre-service teachers of English in providing real teaching experiences at school. However, since the Covid-19 outbreak, all school activities are transferred to online delivery mode, which led to teaching practice implementation to be conducted online. This transference must cause pre-service teachers to have different teaching practice experiences. Therefore, the study aims to discover pre-service teachers' perceptions regarding their teaching practice experience during the pandemic. This research was conducted to 114 seventh-semester students of the English Education Department of FKIP Pontianak. The methodology was a mixed-method where the quantitative procedure was first done, followed by the qualitative procedure. The data were gathered through questionnaires and interviews. The results indicated that the online teaching practice program brought various experiences resulting in "satisfying" and "unsatisfying" perceptions. In detail, more than 50% of participants agreed that despite the challenging situations they faced during the practice, they found the online teaching practice program beneficial, especially in providing broad teaching insights and experience. Hence, despite limitations to its ways of implementation, teaching practice program tends to shape positive teaching mindset and attitudes for pre-service teachers.

Key Words: pandemic; pre-service teachers; teaching practice

ABSTRAK

Studi saat ini melaporkan bahwa program praktik mengajar penting bagi calon guru Bahasa Inggris dalam memberikan pengalaman mengajar yang nyata di sekolah. Namun, sejak merebaknya wabah Covid-19, seluruh kegiatan sekolah dialihkan secara online, sehingga pelaksanaan praktik mengajar dilakukan secara online. Pemindahan ini harus menyebabkan para calon guru memiliki pengalaman praktik mengajar yang berbeda. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui persepsi calon guru tentang pengalaman praktik mengajar mereka selama pandemi. Penelitian ini dilakukan terhadap 114 mahasiswa semester tujuh pada Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Pontianak. Metodologi yang digunakan adalah metode penelitian campuran di mana prosedur kuantitatif dilakukan pertama kali, diikuti oleh prosedur kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui kuesioner dan wawancara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa program praktik mengajar online memberi berbagai pengalaman yang menghasilkan persepsi "memuaskan" atau "tidak memuaskan". Secara rinci, lebih dari 50% peserta setuju bahwa meskipun menghadapi situasi menantang selama praktik, mereka menemukan program praktik mengajar online bermanfaat, terutama dalam memberikan wawasan dan pengalaman mengajar yang luas. Oleh karena itu, dapat disimpulkan bahwa terlepas dari cara pelaksanaannya, program praktik mengajar selalu membentuk pola pikir dan sikap mengajar yang positif kepada guru prajabatan.

Kata Kunci: pandemic, calon guru, praktik mengajar

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INTRODUCTION

Teachers play the most important role in education, especially when shaping students' attitudes, behaviours, and knowledge perceptions (Makovec, 2018). When performing in the classroom, the role of teachers highly promotes an effective learning ambiance, which would be assisting students to create an enjoyable learning experience (Prameswari & Budiyanto, 2017). Hence, teachers are always expected to present themselves professionally (Makovec, 2018; Putra, 2001; Świtała, 2012). Studies have revealed that among several factors affecting teachers' professional performances in the classroom, beliefs and perceptions developed as pre-service teachers are considered influential factors (Moon et al., 2016). In relevant to it, education faculties have implemented a teaching practice program for the seventh-semester students to be ready for their teaching career. This policy is one beneficial program to prepare the students to be professional teachers who always uphold positive impacts.

There are various definitions of a teaching practice program (also known as a teaching practicum). However, there has been one similar concept of this program in which it refers to experiential learning for the pre-service teachers. Teacher practice program builds a foundation and an effective

means to develop prospective teachers' understanding of the why, what, and how of teaching and learning (Abas, 2016). It is a preparatory process that enables pre-service teachers to acquire field experience in schools. It might be an opportunity for them to be certified later (Moon et al., 2012). Moreover, the teaching practice program offers chances to the pre-service teachers to build up a solid connection between current hypothetical information and school rehearses and assist them with acclimatizing theories and practices through detailed observation performed by experienced teachers (Genc & Buyukkarci, 2013).

Since the past decades, studies on the effectiveness of teaching practice programs towards the pre-service teachers' competencies have been conducted. Researchers have discussed this matter thoroughly emphasized its benefits and effectiveness as an initial or prior stage to shape mindset about teaching, as well as to provide broad teaching experiences (Afalla & Fabelico, 2020; Heeralal & Bayaga, 2011; Marais & Meier, 2004; Moon et al., 2012; Quick & Siebörger, 2005). Then, as a part of experiential learning, teaching practice program for education faculties helps the pre-service teachers to demonstrate their teaching knowledge and ability to real-context of teaching; to choose a specialization; and to establish identities as teachers (Afalla & Fabelico, 2020; Fajriah et al., 2019; Moon et al.,

2016). Furthermore, studies also reported that once pre-service teachers have formed positive beliefs and perceptions towards teaching, it rarely changes and is relatively stable (Moon et al., 2016). Accordingly, one research conducted by Amankwah et al. (2017) also revealed the effectiveness of teaching practice programs to the undergraduate teachers, proven with an SD of .789 categorized as high, which means that the program was effective for the students to shape good mindsets towards teaching.

However, there might be differences between the facts mentioned above. The teaching practice program was conducted offline with the current situation requiring them to have an online one due to the school closure policy caused by the Covid-19 outbreak. At least since March 2020, governments of all countries, including Indonesia, have designated the Covid-19 virus as a worldwide pandemic forcing a rapid and significant shift in education at all levels (Varela & Desiderio, 2020). The educational activities from schools to campuses were closed, with most transferring instruction to online delivery through virtual platforms (Ismatun & Sadida, 2020), not to exclude the teaching practice program in education faculties. Having the program online must have brought enormous challenges for the

prospective teachers because they could not experience the real teaching and school setting.

Lately, there has been an increasing number of studies on the perceptions of pre-service teachers towards the online teaching practice programs since mid-2020 (i.e., Graham et al., 2020; Ismatun & Sadida, 2020; McIntosh & Nenonene, 2020; Özkanal et al., 2020; Varela & Desiderio, 2020). Those studies revealed that pre-service teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards the online teaching practice varied; some showed positive responses, and some were not. These different perspectives were due to perceptions from one to another based on what they had perceived while having the experience (Lewis, 2001). Moreover, these increasing numbers of studies also indicated that examining perceptions of people or communities was considered important.

In the light of this matter, the researcher conducted this study to examine the perceptions of the pre-service English teachers of Teacher Training and Education Faculty after experiencing the online teaching practice program for six months completed in October 2020. The researcher believed that their perceptions were important to provide insights for the officials to create better program policies. Through quantitative

and qualitative analysis, the following research questions were addressed:

1. How do the pre-service teachers reflect upon the online teaching practice program?
2. What were the most challenging situations they have faced during the program, and how did they solve them?
3. What benefits did they get the most from the online teaching practice program?
4. As an English teacher, what was the most problematic issue they were facing during online teaching?

METHOD

Research design

This study employed a mixed-method methodology in which quantitative and qualitative approaches were adopted. The mixed-method design would help the researcher provide complete and rich data to be discussed and presented to readers (Creswell, 2014; 2012), especially regarding the pre-service teachers' perceptions towards the online teaching practice program. In the implementation, the quantitative procedure was done first, followed by the qualitative procedure. The

quantitative was done through distributing questionnaire; and then the data were calculated using computational techniques (Creswell, 2014). Meanwhile, the qualitative procedure was done by interviewing some of the participants to explore the experience, perceptions, meanings, or intentions of participants of the research (Almalki, 2016; Leavy, 2017).

Research site and participants

The participants of this study were 114 pre-service teachers. They were the 7th-semester students of the English Education Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty Universitas Tanjungpura who enrolled in the 2020 teaching practice program. The participants were distributed to either public or private schools of junior and senior high school in Pontianak and Kubu Raya Regency, with a total of 57 schools for which the officials determined the placement policy. In specific, the participants were placed in pairs (2 persons) in each school with one or two experienced teachers to guide them.

Data collection and analysis

The data were collected using a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. Both questionnaire and interview questions were related to the participants' experience during their

teaching practice in the pandemic setting adapted from several research studies. The questionnaire was a close-ended style distributed to 114 participants. It was in the form of a Likert Scale with 5 options: very unsatisfying, unsatisfying, neutral, satisfying, and very satisfying. There were 23 items in the questionnaire divided into four parts, namely (1) perceptions towards the overall experience of online teaching practice consisting of five items, (2) perceptions towards benefits of the online teaching practice consisting of seven items, (3) the perceptions towards challenges of the online teaching practice consisting of six items, and (4) the perceptions towards challenges as an English teacher during the online teaching practice consisting of five items. The questionnaire was distributed to the participants through Google Form.

Meanwhile, for the interview, the researcher randomly selected 5 from the 114 participants. The random selection did not need a particular selection system; yet, the selected ones could represent the opinions of the other participants since randomization allowed generalization as suggested by Creswell (2014). In this research, each of five interview participants represented each of five classes in the 7th semester: 3 Regular A classes and 2 Regular B classes. There were six items asked

represented the perceptions of the teachers perceived from their experiences. Both questionnaire and interview questions were adapted from Amankwah et al. (2017) and Varela and Desiderio (2020).

The researcher used calculation to get the percentages and the mean score of the questionnaire responses to analyze the data. The results were then displayed in tables and charts. Meanwhile, to analyze the interview, the researcher firstly transcribed the recordings. After that, they were interpreted, coded, and described in such a way. The interpretation was also made to questionnaire analysis. The researcher did not do any interventions to the data to maintain the originality and the naturalistic setting.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

Since the data were collected through questionnaires and interviews, the findings then displayed the results in different sections.

Questionnaire analysis

There are three parts of the questionnaire. The responses were analysed in three subheadings as Part 1 to Part 3, at which the items were presented in charts and tables.

Part 1: Perceptions towards the overall experience of online teaching practice

The first part of the questionnaire is about the pre-service teachers' perceptions of the online teaching experiences they had been through for six months. The results can be seen in Figure 1 to Figure 5.

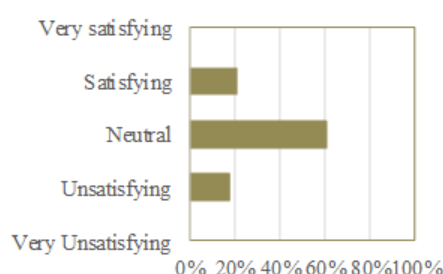


Figure 1. Overall opinions towards teaching practice program

Figure 1 indicates that only three out of five ratings are responded to by the respondents: satisfying, neutral, and unsatisfying. It can be seen that 60.7% or 69 pre-service teachers responded "neutral" option showing they did not feel satisfied nor unsatisfied with the online teaching practice program. Then, 17.9% or 20 pre-service teachers were unsatisfied with the program; and 21.4% or 25 pre-service teachers were satisfied.

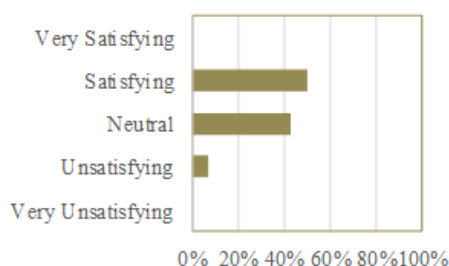


Figure 2. Opinions towards the access of learning and communication with the experienced teachers

From Figure 2, it can be seen that the respondents responded to three out of five ratings given: satisfying, neutral, and unsatisfying. It showed that 42.9% or 49 pre-service teachers responded "neutral" option. Then, 7.1% or 8 persons felt unsatisfied with the access of learning and communication with the experienced teachers; and 50% or 57-persons felt satisfied.

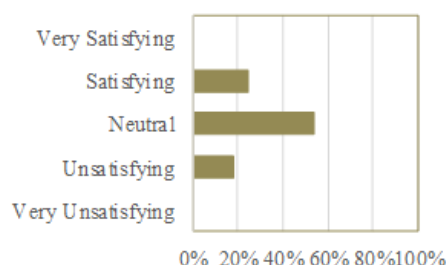


Figure 3. Opinions towards the holistic teaching and school matter

From Figure 3, it can be indicated that there are four ratings responded: very satisfying, satisfying, neutral, and unsatisfying. It can be seen that the rating that responded the most is

neutral, with a percentage of 53.6% or 61 pre-service teachers. The second most rated rating is satisfying with a percentage of 25% or 29 pre-service teachers. The third is unsatisfying with 17.9% or 20 pre-service teachers. Furthermore, the least responded is very satisfying with a percentage of 3.6% or 4 pre-service teachers.

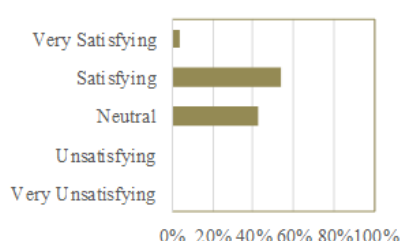


Figure 4. Opinions towards the online teaching practice placement

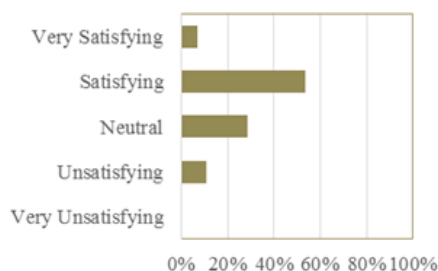


Figure 5. Opinions towards the access to communicate with the field supervisor

Figure 4 shows there are three rating responses: very satisfying, satisfying, and neutral. It can be seen that 53.6% or 61 pre-service teachers responded satisfying; 42.9% or 49 persons responded "neutral" option, and 3.6% or 4 persons felt very satisfied with the placement policy.

Figure 5 shows there are four rating responses: very satisfying, satisfying, neutral, and unsatisfying. It can be seen that most of them felt satisfying with the access to communicate with the field supervisors during their online teaching practice, with a percentage of 53.5% or 61 pre-service teachers. Then, 28.6% or 33 persons responded neutral; 10.7% or 12 persons responded unsatisfied. Furthermore, 7.1% or 8 persons responded "very satisfied" option.

Part 2: Perceptions towards the benefits derived from online teaching practice

Part 2 of the questionnaire concerns the benefits derived from the teaching practice in the Covid-19 pandemic situation. The data of Part 2 analysis are presented in Table 1 covers items, percentages of the items, and the decision of each of them.

Table 1 show indicates that more than 50% of pre-service teachers agreed that the online teaching practice offered benefits to teaching knowledge and professional development. As being presented, the highest percentage was 83.5% related to the advantages of teaching knowledge improvement and then was followed by the second highest benefits with a percentage of 81.5%, namely (1) online teaching practice deepened the pre-service

teachers' interest in teaching, (2) online teaching practice gives them broader insights about teaching which is beneficial for their teaching career, and (3) online teaching practice improved their teaching experience.

Table 1. Benefits derived from online teaching practice

No	Item	%	Category
1	I deepened my interest in teaching	81.5	Agree
2	Online teaching practice equipped me with the necessary teaching skills	77.8	Agree
3	Online teaching practice improved my teaching knowledge	83.5	Agree
4	Online teaching practice gives me broader insights into teaching, which is beneficial for my teaching career	81.5	Agree
5	Online teaching practice increased my teaching efficacy	77.8	Agree
6	Online teaching practice supported my learning towards a professional teaching	73.8	Agree
7	Online teaching practice improved my teaching experience	81.5	Agree

Part 3: Perceptions towards the challenges of online teaching practice

Part 3 of the questionnaire is about the challenges faced by the pre-service teachers during their teaching practice in the Covid-19 pandemic situation. The data of Part 3 are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Challenges of online teaching practice

N	Items	%	Category
1	Lack of teaching aids and responses	75	Agree
2	Inadequate time for practicing teaching including classroom management	78.6	Agree
3	Inadequate time to learn administrative teaching matters	64.3	Agree
4	Lack of conducive learning situations	75	Agree
5	Lack of communication with the experienced teachers	67.9	Disagree
6	Lack of communication with the field supervisor	57.1	Disagree

Table 2 shows pre-service teachers' responses towards their perceptions of challenges they faced during the online teaching practice program. It is indicated that out of six items asked, four are responded by "agree", and two are responded by "disagree". The range

of percentages between those who agree and disagree with the statements is mostly close enough. As we can see, in item 6, for example, the range is only 14.2% between those who disagree and agree with one of the challenges of online teaching practice was lack of communication with the field supervisor. The pre-service teachers who disagreed are 57.1% or equal to 65 persons, while those who agreed are 42.9% or equals to 49 persons. However, in item 2, the range is quite far. More than 75% of pre-service teachers (precisely 78.6% or equals to 90 persons) agreed that inadequate time for practicing teaching was their most likely challenge in online teaching practice.

What can be inferred from the results of the questionnaire analyses above is that despite the pandemic situation of when it was implemented, teaching practice maintains its cores in a way it improves pre-service teachers' teaching knowledge and also interests. The pandemic situation did not demotivate or hold back the pre-service teachers from learning and dig as much information and knowledge about teaching from the experienced teachers. However, the challenges also impacted them, especially regarding time adequacy for teaching, lack of teaching aids, and inconducive teaching-learning situations.

Part 4: Perceptions towards the challenges as an English teacher during online teaching practice.

Part 4 focuses on discovering the participants' perceptions of the challenges an English teacher faces during online teaching practice. The result of the analysis can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Challenges as an English Teacher during Online Teaching Practice

N	Items	%	Category
1	Difficulty in delivering materials in full English	97.8	Agree
2	Difficulty in teaching and assessing speaking skill	91.2	Agree
3	Difficulty in teaching and assessing writing skill	66.7	Agree
4	Difficulty in teaching and assessing reading skill	53.1%	Agree
5	Difficulty in teaching and assessing listening skill	74.8	Agree

As shown in Table 3, all 114 pre-service teachers responded with similar responses towards the challenges as an English teacher in this online teaching. They agreed that delivering materials in English was difficult to do during online teaching, with a percentage of 97.8%. Besides, they also agreed that

teaching and assessing speaking skills were challenging amongst four English skills, with 91.2%.

Interview analysis

This section presents the results of the interview analysis of five interviewees. The analysis is presented using subheadings Q1 to Q5. The researcher displays the responses of all participants, then interprets the data qualitatively.

Q1: Describe your experience as a pre-service teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic!

From the interviewees' responses, it was inferred that the pre-service teachers were anxious when they did their teaching practice online for the first time. From the responses, too, it can be learned there are four similar experiences that the pre-service teachers shared during teaching practice program in the pandemic situation: (1) lack of opportunity to practice teaching, (2) less interesting or dull learning environment, (3) more opportunities to deal with teaching administrative matters, and (4) utilizing technology more often. Among these shared experiences, the foremost one is lack of teaching practice, that four out of five interviewees responded the same thing. They were given limited access or opportunities to handle the classes (Interviewee-2; Interviewee-3;

Interviewee-4), although one of them (Interviewee-1) was given 11 classes to handle.

However, on a more positive side, the interviewees agreed that the online teaching practice offered more opportunities to tailor up with administrative stuff such as lesson plans, annual and semester plans, assessments, teaching journals. Moreover, they were also given chances to do teacher on duty, allowing them to check and supervise all teachers while teaching (Interview-3). In addition to that, the online teaching practice has also provided them with more opportunities to utilize and explore technology. The school required the teachers to use virtual platforms such as Google Meet, Quizzes, Google Classroom, and Ruang Guru, which positively impacted the pre-service teachers. Through online teaching practice, they finally set techniques or methods to manage online classes to run effectively and use more facilitations from the internet and various types of online platforms (Interviewee-1, Interviewee-2, Interviewee-3, Interviewee-4, & Interviewee-5).

Q2: What have you personally experienced and observed as a pre-service teacher in this challenging situation?

All interviewees experienced several similarities: they were anxious, struggling to adapt to new teaching environments, and difficult to conduct effective classroom management. However, the online teaching practice gave them insights that they had to keep learning to solve the problems they found, especially related to the use of technology and effective strategies in teaching. They realized that teachers were the core of the teaching and learning activity. They had to solve any obstacles and adapt quickly to any teaching situation to give the best services to the students.

Q3-Q4: What challenges have you faced as a pre-service teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic, and how did you solve them?

From the responses, it was indicated that the pre-service teachers faced almost similar problems. They found classroom management to be the most challenging aspect of online teaching. According to them, many students seemed to be misbehaved and indiscipline during online class such as being late joining the room, submitting assignments, and leaving the class without permission since there were no

direct interactions between the teachers and the students (Interviewee-1; Interviewee-2; Interviewee-3; Interviewee-4; Interviewee-5). Besides, technical problems such as bad internet connections, lack of skill in utilizing technology, and students with no supported devices like smartphones were also significant challenges (Interviewee-1; Interviewee-2; Interviewee-3; Interviewee-4; Interviewee-5). However, due to facing these challenges, the pre-service teachers learned strategies of how to solve them. These also motivated them to upgrade themselves to be professional teachers, as seen in how they solved the problems.

Q5: What problems did you face or observe during online teaching?

From the responses, teaching English during the pandemic was quite challenging, especially when teaching using English. The interviewees said they were unsure if the students understood the explanation or instruction when they were teaching in English since no direct interaction happened. Besides, they claimed that from their personal experience and observation during online teaching, speaking and listening were the most difficult skills to be conducted either teaching or assessing it. They said

reading, writing, and grammar mastery were the most frequent activities done during their teaching practice because these skills were much more easily administered to the students.

Discussion

This study investigated the perceptions of 114 pre-service teachers of the English Education Department towards the online implementation of the 2020 teaching practice program related to the challenges and advantages of the program. From the statistical and narrative analysis, the researcher found that online teaching practice offered indispensable advantages despite the challenges. The pre-service teachers perceived that the online teaching practice had deepened their interests in teaching. Nevertheless, before talking about the advantages, the researcher would like to address the challenges of online teaching practice according to pre-service teachers of this study.

The first challenge was that online teaching practice offered inadequate time for having independent practice in the classroom. What could be perceived from the results, especially from the interview ones, was that the pre-service teachers were assigned to be the teachers' assistants who were responsible for preparing the administrative teaching requirements,

such as lesson plan, teaching journal, or yearly plan. Thus, when they were asked to teach, they were struggling because they could not manage the class well. The case resulted in the second biggest challenge that was less conducive classroom situations. The pre-service teachers said they were difficult to control or manage the classroom, particularly related to students' behaviour and engagement in the teaching-learning process. They said the students showed less enthusiasm during the class. They were less active, and they would talk only when they were asked to do so.

The third challenge was that online teaching practice did not provide adequate teaching aids and responses. For pre-service teachers, teaching practice was the first real-time teaching experience. Hence, complete guidance and directions on what to do or what to prepare for teaching were necessary. However, unfortunately, they did not get this attention comprehensively. In fact, as the beginner, pre-service teachers needed to have positive thoughts towards teaching and to feel secure when teaching. That is why complete guidance and feedback from senior teachers in order to be able to conduct their own teaching professionally were always becoming necessities (Afalla & Fabelico, 2020;

Amankwah et al., 2017; Heeralal & Bayaga, 2011; Moon et al., 2016).

The fourth challenge was in terms of technical issues. The unstable internet connection and lack of accommodation for students were two of them. According to pre-service teachers, the students liked to leave the virtual classroom without permission; or leave and join the room several times. Some students were always late to join the room because of an internet connection or waiting for the gadgets, which distracted the concentration of other students and the teaching-learning process.

Last but not least, regarding their specialty or major as English teachers, the pre-service teachers revealed that teaching English speaking or using English during the teaching and learning process was not possible. The first factor was because they were not in the class, so they could not fully motivate the students to speak, and the second one was that the students' ability in speaking was low. According to them, the majority of students did not understand English. That was why using English was difficult. Similarly, the listening activities, including daily practices or tests, were also challenging to do. This was due to the English ability, unstable connection, and

incompatibility of the students' gadgets.

Despite the challenges mentioned above, the advantages of online teaching practice helped the pre-service teachers achieve the program's main objective. According to them, the program's overall activities have let them obtain much information about the concept of teaching and professional teachers. Besides, the practice also offered valuable teaching experience to shape a positive mindset and attitude towards teaching. Furthermore, the pre-service teachers said that teaching practice program during pandemic has also provided opportunities to be familiar with technology in education. As can be inferred from the findings, they were compelled to use more than one teaching application. Even though they were quite familiar with technology, they did not have the know-how of educational technology or to utilize technology to educate or teach. Hence, the pre-service teachers also learned how to use and select appropriate teaching applications through having online teaching practice.

Further, they mentioned that they were also suggested to apply various teaching strategies. During the online class, they realized that the monotonous teaching strategy was ineffective since

the students were likely to get distracted easily during the class. In online teaching practice, they were forced to find various strategies to motivate the students to participate in the class. Through online teaching practice, they realized that becoming teachers was a challenge because teachers had to be ready to educate students in any situation, either online or offline.

These findings corroborated and were also supported by findings of previous research conducted by Abas (2016), Daniel (2020), Ersin et al. (2020), Graham et al. (2020), Ismatun and Sadida (2020), McIntosh and Nenonene (2020), Özkanal et al. (2020), and Varela and Desiderio (2020). These studies also revealed that online teaching practice indeed brought challenges and advantages to pre-service teachers. In terms of challenges, they mentioned that online teaching practice caused the pre-service teachers to perceive fearful situations such as (1) unable to perform teaching independently; (2) unable to manage classrooms; (3) always facing technical issues; and (4) unable to get facilitated appropriately by experienced teachers.

Nevertheless, in contrary, the studies mentioned that pre-service teachers also remarked many advantages from the program involving

(1) helping them to understand the concept of teaching and duties of professional teachers; (2) getting them prepared to face future education; (3) helping them to build creative and innovative teaching skills, and (4) letting them more familiar with educational applications. In light of this matter, McIntosh and Nenonene (2020) emphasized that although pre-service teachers were fearful of the future and helpless in their desire for normalcy, the courage of pre-service teachers to do so through online teaching practice was sharpened due to the advantages they could obtain.

In short, it can be understood that whatever the form is, teaching practice is always indeed useful for pre-service teachers. Its powers to equip pre-service teachers with teaching knowledge and skills, to provide broader insights about professional teachers, and to shape positive mindset and attitudes towards teaching are actually what make teaching practice important (Abas, 2016; Afalla & Fabelico, 2020; Fajriah et al., 2019; Heeralal & Bayaga, 2011; Marais & Meier, 2004; Quick & Siebörger, 2005).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

The analyses have revealed that pre-service teachers' perceptions towards the teaching practice program

conducted in Covid-19 pandemic derived from their six months teaching practice experience are various. The study found that the teaching practice during pandemic offered numerous challenging situations and benefits. However, the challenging situations such as technical problems, classroom management difficulty, or the inability to use English (for they were assigned to be English teachers) were mere obstacles that they could finally handle. Eventually, those problems became the best teachers, which provided them with more comprehensive experience. Through experiencing teaching practice online, they realized that teachers indeed have to keep learning and updated to tailor up with all situations so that the activities of teaching itself can still be conducted well.

Last but not least, this study allows other researchers to find out deeper information related to the online implementation of teaching practice programs due to the Covid-19 outbreak. The researchers could also use the results as a reference to conduct similar studies or elaborate the cases to discover brand-new phenomena relevant to online teaching practice. Finally, since this study was conducted to English Education Department students, the researcher believes that the results are useful to offer new insights to the officials of the Education

Faculty to create better policies for online teaching practice programs.

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